

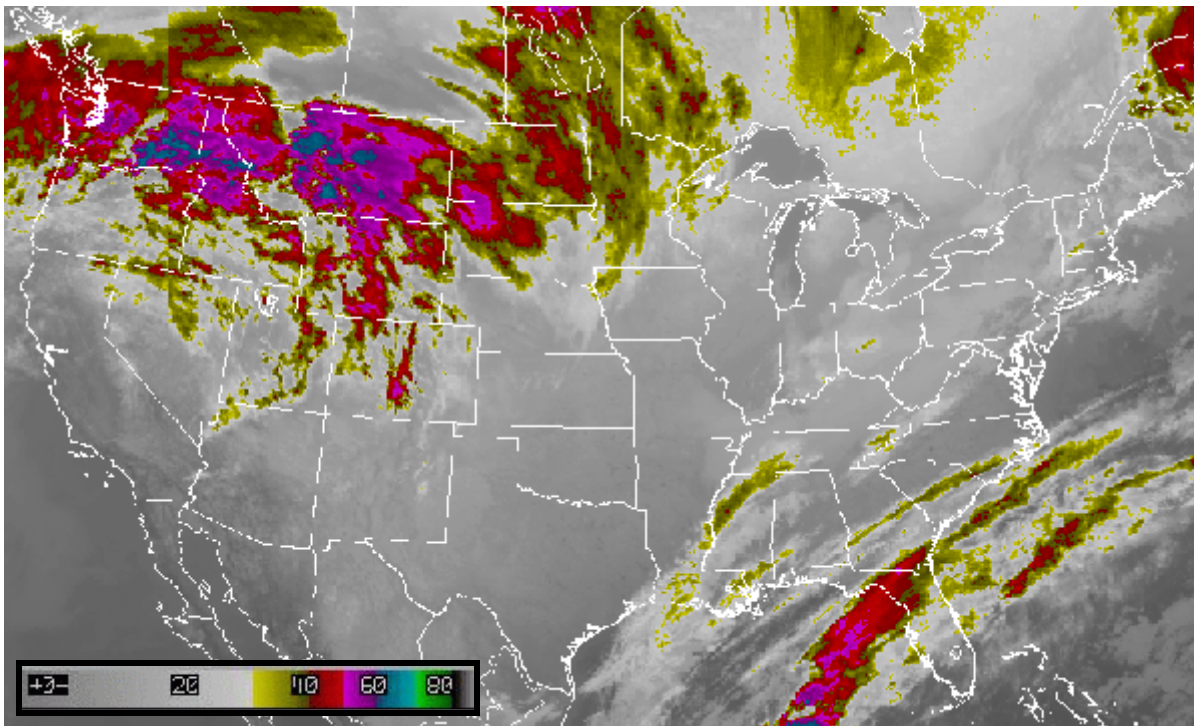
Satellite image with enhanced low cloud-top temperatures (degrees C) for 7:15 a.m. EST (NOAA)

### **Agricultural Weather Highlights - Friday - February 22, 2002**

- ☺ ***In the West***, locally heavy precipitation is overspreading the ***Pacific Northwest***, with winter storm warnings posted as far east as ***western Montana***. Conditions in ***California and Arizona*** still favor spring fieldwork and small grain development.
- ☺ ***On the Plains***, unfavorable warmth and dryness dominate the ***central and southern hard red winter wheat areas***, with today's highs expected to reach the 60s and lower 70s degrees F. Scattered snow showers are sweeping across the ***Dakotas***.
- ☺ ***In the Corn Belt***, cool, clear weather helps to firm up muddy fields and feedlots.
- ☺ ***In the South***, showers fell overnight from ***eastern Texas through the Delta***, as well as in ***central Florida***. Unfavorable dryness persists elsewhere in the ***Southeast*** and the ***mid-Atlantic region***.

**Outlook:** Over the weekend, lingering wet weather will boost mountain snow pack and reservoir levels over the ***Pacific Northwest***,. Warm weather will continue for a few more days from the ***southern Plains to the mid-Atlantic States***, but by early next week, a bitter cold air mass will begin its descent into the ***northern Plains and upper Midwest***. The sudden transition to cold weather may further stress winter wheat and ***Midwestern*** livestock, but snow showers are forecast to precede the cold air in ***Montana and the Dakotas***, offering some protection to winter wheat. Colder weather will also favor sugar beet storage. The cold air mass is expected to encompass much of the east by week's end. The NWS 6-10 day outlook for February 27 - March 3 depicts below-normal temperatures from the ***Rocky Mountains to the East Coast***, and above-normal temperatures in ***California and Arizona***. Wet weather is expected across much of the ***East***, with the highest likelihood along the ***Gulf Coast*** and in ***New England***. Near- to above-normal precipitation is also forecast from ***central Montana to Kansas***, which would benefit winter wheat. Dry weather will dominate the remainder of the Nation, including the ***Pacific Northwest***, the ***Southwest from California to Texas***, and the ***upper Mississippi Valley***.

***Contact:*** Mark Brusberg, Agricultural Meteorologist, USDA/OCE/WAOB, Washington, D.C. (202-720-3508)



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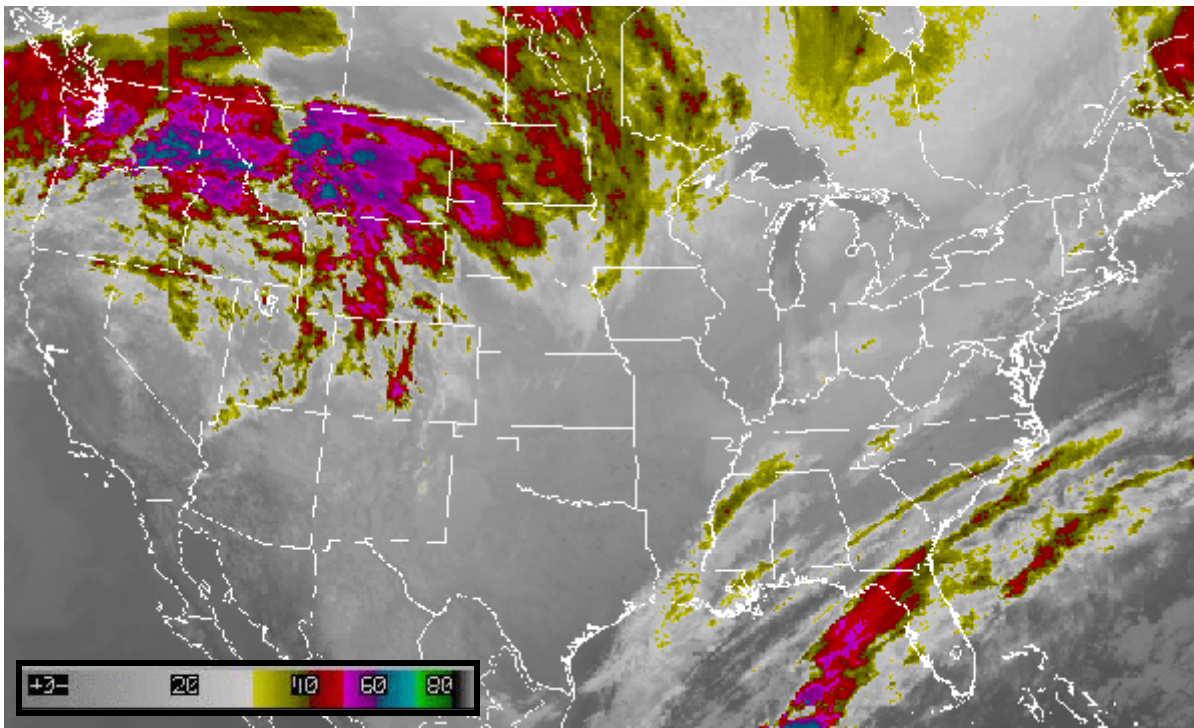
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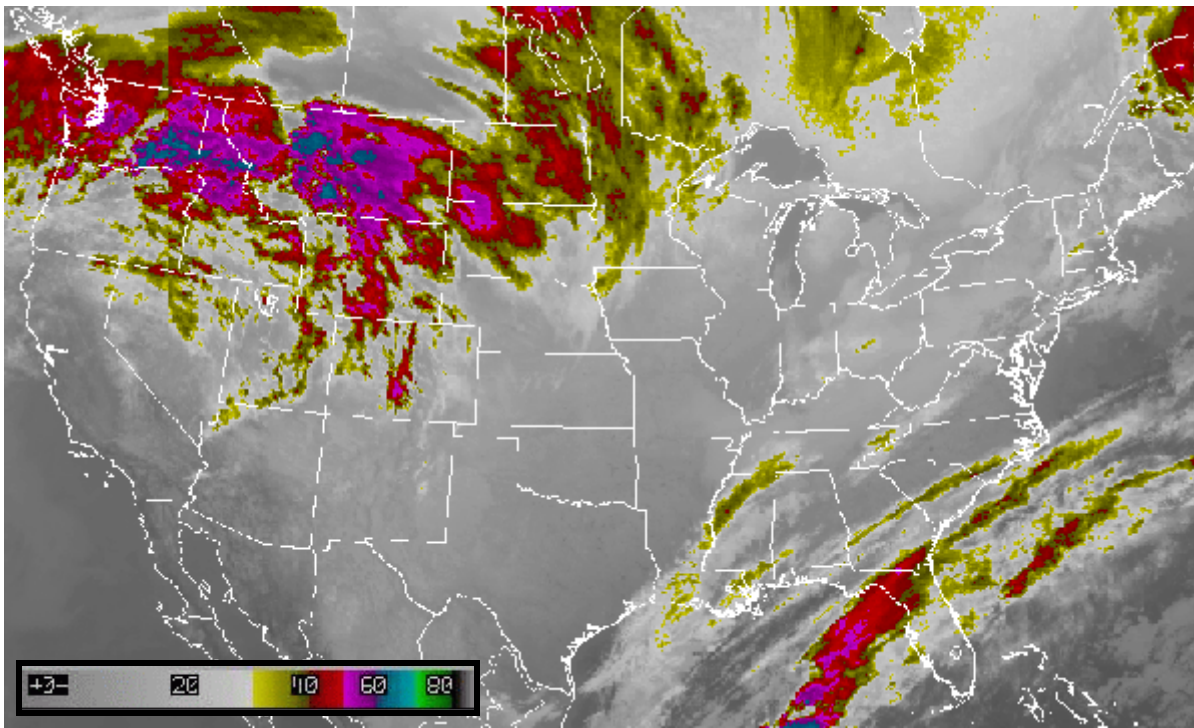
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